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News Releases

New Commanding Officer to Continue Research Excellence at NHRC

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From Naval Health Research Center Public Affairs



Capt. Marshall Monteville assumed command of the Naval Health Research Center (NHRC) from Capt. Rita Simmons during a change of command and retirement ceremony held aboard Naval Base Point Loma, Aug. 17.

SAN DIEGO – Capt. Marshall Monteville assumed command of the Naval Health Research Center (NHRC) from Capt. Rita Simmons during a change of command and retirement ceremony held aboard Naval Base Point Loma, Aug. 17.

Simmons, who is retiring from the Navy after 30 years of service, started her naval career as an aviator before being commissioned into the Medical Service Corps as an aerospace physiologist. She has led NHRC since 2015.

“Serving as NHRC’s commanding officer for the past two years has been an honor,” said Simmons. “The scientists and support staff at this command are unparalleled in their professionalism, expertise, and dedication. Their commitment to improving the health and readiness of our service members is reflected in the high caliber research they conduct each and every day. Meeting the evolving needs of today’s warfighter is a challenge that demands continual innovation and an agile mindset. The team here has met that challenge head on. I know they will continue to excel under the leadership of Capt. Monteville.”

During Simmons’ tour as commanding officer, NHRC launched a norovirus vaccine clinical trial, brokered a first-of-its-kind research partnership between the Department of Defense (DoD) and Veterans Administration, engaged in more than 300 research collaborations, conducted research

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operations in approximately 80 countries, oversaw 173 research protocols, and produced more than 180 journal articles.

Monteville, an experienced Navy Medicine researcher and microbiologist, has served in several leadership roles over his 23-year career, including his most recent as the commanding officer of Naval Medical Research Center-Asia, since being fleeted up from executive officer in 2015.

"The Naval Health Research Center has a stellar reputation for conducting exemplary research and I'm honored to be entrusted with command of such a well-respected organization," said Monteville. "Captain Simmons has done an impressive job as commanding officer over the past two years, paving the way for NHRC's continued success as a premier scientific institution. I'm looking forward to working with the staff to identify new opportunities that best serve our customers throughout the DoD and improve the health and readiness of our warfighters."

Monteville takes charge of a command with research activities that span a wide spectrum, from physical readiness to joint medical planning, to wounded warrior recovery and behavioral health interventions, all focusing on the health, readiness, and well-being of U.S. service members and their families.

The research conducted by NHRC is operationally relevant, driven by fleet requirements in support of a core mission to optimize operational readiness and warfighter health by informing DoD policy through research excellence. NHRC's primary areas of research include operational readiness and health, military population health, and operational infectious diseases.

As the DoD's premier deployment health research center, NHRC's cutting-edge research and development is used to optimize the operational health and readiness of the nation's armed forces. In proximity to more than 95,000 active duty service members, world-class universities, and industry partners, NHRC sets the standard in joint ventures, innovation, and translational research.

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